

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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SUBJ: CHIEF OF COAP DISCUSSES PRESIDENCY

1. GENERAL JOSE GRAHAM HURTADO, CHIEF OF PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORS (COAP), WHOSE EXIT HAD BEEN WIDELY RUMORED IN LAST DAYS OF VELASCO REGIME, IS AGAIN IN PUBLIC VIEW DELIVERING THOSE EMOTIONAL AND "REVOLUTIONARY" TIRADES IN DEFENSE OF THE REVOLUTION WHICH ARE SO CHARACTERISTIC OF HIM.
2. SPEAKING BEFORE WORKERS AT THE FOOD MINISTRY, GRAHAM HURTADO DWELT ON STANDARD THEMES, I.E. PERUVIAN REVOLUTION IS NEITHER COMMUNIST NOR CAPITALIST BUT HUMANIST AND PARTICIPATIONIST. IN ADDITION HE EMPHASIZED THE "INSTITUTIONAL" QUALITY OF THE REVOLUTION, POINTING OUT THAT THE REVOLUTION DOES NOT DEPEND ON INDIVIDUALS BUT ON BEDROCK OF ARMED FORCES INSTITUTIONAL UNITY. IN SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE PRESIDENCY, GRAHAM HURTADO SAID THAT THE ARMED FORCES DIRECT THE REVOLUTION AND THE ARMED FORCES "DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING IT (THE PRESIDENCY) TO THE PERSON ITS MEMBERS CONSIDER SUITABLE".
3. ELABORATING ON THIS THEME, GRAHAM HURTADO EMPHATICALLY DECLARED THAT "THE REVOLUTION IS NOT THAT (CONCEIVED BY) GENERAL VELASCO, NOT THAT OF GENERAL GILARDI AND NOT THAT OF

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ADMIRAL VARGAS". THE ARMED FORCES GOVERN, SAID GRAHAM, AND FOR

THAT REASON GENERAL MORALES BERMUDEZ AT THIS TIME HAS BEEN GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY TO CONDUCT THE REVOLUTION IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT.

4. COMMENT: GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY LEADERS HAVE BEEN CAREFUL TO CHARACTERIZE THE REMOVAL OF VELASCO AS PURELY LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RECTIFICATION OF AN ANOMALY (VELASCO'S PERSONALITY CULT AND HIS ERRORS OF JUDGMENT). FULL CONCURRENCE OF A UNIFIED MILITARY IN THE REMOVAL IS STRESSED. THE REVOLUTION CONTINUES ON THE COURSE CHARTED BY THE MILITARY AS INSTITUTION. GRAHAM'S SPEECH, BY FOCUSING ON THIS POINT, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MEMORY MENTIONING PAST TOP LEADERS BY NAME - SEEMS TO ALLUDE TO A SOMEWHAT DIMINISHED PRESIDENCY WHERE THE INCUMBENT CLEARLY SERVES AT THE PLEASURE OF THE ARMED FORCES. THE AURA OF VELASCO'S PRESIDENCY WAS THAT CHANGE WOULD OCCUR ONLY WHEN VELASCO SO WILLED IT.

5. THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT EMBASSY HAS HEARD THE SUGGESTION THAT THE MORALES BERMUDEZ' TENURE IS NOT NECESSARILY OPEN-ENDED. ON ONE RECENT OCCASION, FOR EXAMPLE, A FERNANDEZ MALDONADO SUPPORTER TOLD EMBOFF THAT MORALES BERMUDEZ WOULD "THEORETICALLY" STILL BE PRESIDENT IN 1978 WHEN FERNANDEZ MALDONADO WOULD HAVE TO RETIRE (PRESUMABLY FROM PRIME MINISTERSHIP). SUCH COMMENTS MAY SUGGEST THAT "UNANIMOUS" INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR MORALES BERMUDEZ NEED NOT BE IRREVOCABLE AND THAT PERSONAL AMBITIONS AND IDEOLOGICAL RIVALRIES WITHIN THE MILITARY LIVE ON IN POST-VELASCO PERU.
DEAN

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